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REMARKS

The Examiner has repeated an objection to the Abstract for containing the word "disclosure". Applicants have reviewed the Abstract as submitted and respectfully maintain that the Abstract does not include the word "disclosure". Accordingly, the Applicants have not submitted a revised Abstract. Clarification is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 are currently pending in the patent application. The Examiner has rejected the Claims 1-3 and 12-16 as unpatentable over Endo in view of Du; Claims 4 and 5 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over the teachings of Endo in view of Dong; and, Claims 9-11 under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over the teachings of Endo in view of Kraft.

Claims 6-8 have been objected to but would be allowable if rewritten in independent format. At this time, the Applicants are not submitting new versions of Claims 6-8

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since Applicants respectfully assert that all of the pending claims are patentable over the cited prior art.

Claims 1-3 and 12-16 have been rejected as unpatentable over Endo in view of Du. The Endo patent is directed to a workflow system for task allocation which looks at attribute data at the head (i.e., in the header) of a task which has been received and then assigns a numerical value to it (see: Col. 11, lines 38-51). The numerical value then functions as an indicator of priority for the task. The Endo patent does not analyze a process model, comprising one or more activities as nodes of an arbitrary graph and having directed edges of the graph defining the control flow within a process model, to determine if a priority execution indicator is assigned to one of the activities within the process model, as is explicitly called for in the language of Claims 1, 2, 3, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16. Endo's step of looking at attribute data in a packet/task header is not the same or suggestive of analyzing a process model to determine if a priority execution indicator is assigned to one of the activities within the process model.

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The Examiner has further cited the Du patent as disclosing a workflow management system having a node graph and processor. Applicants respectfully assert that, while Du teaches a workflow management system, it is not logical to assume that one having skill in the art would be motivated to modify the Endo patent teachings with those of Du. Applicants have reviewed the cited teachings of the Du patent, from Col. 3, lines 4-8 and Col. 7, lines 36-54, and respectfully assert that the Du patent does not provide those teachings which are missing from the Endo patent. The Du patent teaches at Col. 3, lines 4-8 that it applies to a computer network environment. "We do workflow management in a computer network environment" is a general statement which clearly does not obviate the specific claim language which is directed to *how* to perform workflow management. With regard to the teachings from Col. 7, lines 36-54, Applicants note that Du again is teaching the environment but does not teach or suggest the invention as claimed, including those teachings missing from Endo of analyzing a process model for priority execution indicators, etc.

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Applicants respectfully assert that if one were to combine the teachings of the two patents, one would not arrive at the invention as claimed, since the Du patent does not teach analyzing a process model, comprising one or more activities as nodes of an arbitrary graph and having directed edges of the graph defining the control flow within a process model, to determine if a priority execution indicator is assigned to one of the activities within the process model, as is explicitly called for in the language of the claims. Absent some explicit teachings from Du regarding those claim features not taught by Endo, it cannot be maintained that the combination of teachings obviates the invention.

It is well established under U.S. Patent Law that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention when there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art (*In re Fine*, 837 F. 2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In Re Jones*, 958 F. 2d

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347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992)). Since neither the Endo nor the Du patent teaches the analyzing of a process model to determine if a priority execution indicator is assigned, it cannot be maintained that the combination obviates that express language of the claims.

Claims 4 and 5 have been rejected under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over the teachings of Endo in view of Dong. The Endo patent has been discussed above and Applicants rely on those arguments without repeating same. The Examiner has stated that Dong discloses a workflow comprising a priority execution specification. Applicants respectfully disagree. The Dong patent looks at task characteristics (e.g., "task unneeded" or "task necessary") or properties which will enhance overall performance, so that processing will not be held up unnecessarily pending execution of "necessary tasks". The Dong teachings do not, however, teach that the task characteristics are activity priority values nor do they obviate the additional level of priority specification which is taught by the present application.

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In page 13, lines 15-23 and in page 14, lines 3-12, the present specification expressly teaches that multiple priority values can exist, for an activity, a performance sphere, and a process model. The priority value for an activity will take precedence over that of the activity's sphere; and, the priority value for a performance sphere will take precedence over that of the process model. Claims 4 and 5 recite determining if a priority execution specification is associated with the activity and assigning the priority execution indicator based on the activity's priority execution specification.

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of Endo and Dong does not obviate the claim language. Endo, as discussed above, simply looks at attribute data for a task. To modify Endo with Dong, one would simply insert the task characteristic into the attribute data for the task. In either instance, one would not arrive at a method wherein a process model is first analyzed for a priority execution indicator and further analyzed for a priority execution specification just for the activity. Absent some teachings of analysis of a process model, determining if one or more

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priority values exist, assigning the determined priority value to the activity, and launching execution of the activity according to the priority value, it cannot be maintained that the combination of Endo and Dong obviates the invention as set forth in the pending claims.

The Examiner has responded to the above arguments by saying that Claims 4 and 5 make no mention of any priority values "being existed for any activities (sic)". Applicants respectfully point out that both Claims 4 and 5 depend from Claim 1 which explicitly recites the priority execution indicator and both Claims 4 and 5 additionally recite the priority execution specification. Clearly, therefore, the claim language supports the arguments.

Claims 9-11 have been rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over the teachings of Endo in view of Kraft. The distinctions over Endo recited above are relied upon herein. The Examiner has additionally cited the Kraft patent which teaches, in Columns 7-9, that an application may have a process-id of an X application but must move it to another workspace for which it does not have a

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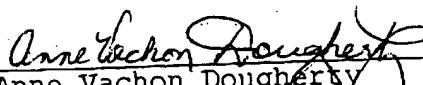
process-id. Under the Kraft teachings at Col. 9, lines 7-10, the application will be re-prioritized. Applicants respectfully assert that the Kraft teachings of re-prioritizing clearly do not obviate the invention as claimed. Claims 9-11 recite that the launching comprises mapping the priority execution indicator to a value based on either the execution environment (Claims 9 and 10) or the communication system (Claim 11). Mapping the priority execution indicator is not the same as Kraft reprioritizing due to the lack of an appropriate workspace process-id.

Based on the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections and issuance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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